

PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 29, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Canright called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. with Commissioners Emilson, Falk, Liske, Nelson, Councilor Hunter, Mayor Clark and Chairperson Canright in attendance.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER

1. Chairperson Canright welcomed Larry Falk as the newly appointed commissioner who will replace Nick Wasser.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. Application for Sketch Plan Review; Location: east of Blocks 31 and 32, north of Hartwell Park and Charles Street, east of Lena Street, south of Otto Street, and west of the North Railroad Street; Zoned: Historic Business and General Commercial; Applicant Tate Rogers; Owners: Dan and Carla Choat

Revised architectural renditions prepared by Hines Designs LLC submitted by the applicant; emails dated November 29, 2016 from business owner Jack Petruceli; and from business owner Chas Blanton; Staff Report dated November 23, 2016 from the Town Manager/Planner and Lu Hauger, Assistant Planner.

Commissioner Falk recused himself from the hearing because he was not present for the previous hearing on October 25.

Town Manager Coates presented an application for sketch plan review for 316 North Lena. The hearing was continued from the October 25 Planning Commission meeting in order to receive clarification from the Town Council regarding the use of public land. Manager Coates stated the Town Council decided the use of public land would not be allowed.

Applicant Tate Rogers presented a revised sketch and utility plan. Mr. Rogers stressed his intent for the project is to provide a solution for affordable housing in town because of his commitment to the community. The alley in the proposed sketch and utility plan has been removed and the development does not encroach onto public property. As a result, a reduced set back on Lena Street is being requested. He noted the portion of the property zoned Historic Business would not be developed until it is more economically viable to do so.

Sundra Hines of Hines Designs LLC reviewed the architectural renditions for the audience.

The Commission discussed the proposed development with the applicant and Ms. Hines. They discussed allowing short-term rental as a use by right or as a conditional use at length.

Chairperson Canright opened the hearing for public comment.

The emails from Mr. Petrucceli and Ms. Blanton were read to the Commission and audience. Mr. Petrucceli spoke in favor of the development, stating that currently commercial real estate is not a viable investment in Ridgway, rental incomes are struggling to cover costs, and noted a lack of product for purchase. Ms. Blanton also spoke in favor of the development because local employees cannot find adequate housing, which reduces the ability to retain quality employees.

Tom McKenney spoke in favor of the project and questioned if the parking spaces provided in the plan were to code, noted an affordable housing element was not present, and the view for the neighbors on the west side of Lena Street appears compromised.

Ms. Hines responded that the size of the town homes, which are primarily one bedroom with a small office, is the proposed affordable housing solution because the small size should keep the market price low. She commented the parking is not attached to each unit because a common parking area is proposed, and this element is part of the request in the application.

Randy Charrette spoke in favor of the development commenting there needs to be more housing growth in town to encourage local business growth. He also spoke in favor of short term rentals because they assist in the growth needed to support local businesses.

Charles Mueller spoke in favor of the project commenting the development appears to meet the current need in town. He also spoke of the pros and cons of his short-term rental business, and encouraged the Planning Commission to approve the reduced setbacks.

Ken Miller spoke in opposition of the project because of the density and building heights. Mr. Miller noted he would prefer the proposed property be zoned residential only.

Todd Schroedel spoke in favor of the development because the development comports with his vision of the property.

Property owner Dan Choate spoke of the return on his investment in the property and commented on opportunities for revenue benefits to persons who may invest in the property once the development is completed. He strongly urged the Commission to approve the application.

Property owner Carla Choate spoke of her positive short-term rental experiences as a customer in Moab, Utah. Mrs. Choate suggested strong regulations for the success of short-term rentals.

Stephanie Rogers spoke in favor of the project and commented the short-term rental discussion clouds the primary objective for developing the proposed property.

Chairperson Canright closed the hearing for public comment.

The Commission discussed the planned unit development process for the application and the impact of the development to the community.

ACTION:

Councilor Hunter moved to approve the application for Sketch Plan with the conditions that the development conforms to the 2011 Comprehensive Plan, and that 10% of the development or 2 units are deed restricted. Pursuant to the Staff Report, the applicant shall work with Staff on drainage, snow removal, utilities, water, sewer, landscaping, sidewalks, and construction costs. The setbacks are approved as shown in the sketch plan except for unit 1A on the east corner is approved to be 2.5 feet instead of zero, progressing to 8 ft. when able; and finalize the rezone and short-term rental issues during the preliminary plat process. Mayor Clark seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The Commission paused for a break at 8:10 p.m. and resumed at 8:20 p.m.

Commissioner Falk returned to sit with the Commission.

POLICY MATTERS

2. Zoning Discussion

The documents submitted for the discussion were the proposed draft 4 of new zoning districts, Ridgway Municipal Code (RMC) 7-3-6.5, High Density Residential, and RMC 7-3-8.5 High Density Residential and Mixed Use Business Residential, and the proposed additions to RMC 7-3-10 (A); Dimensional Requirements, from the Town Manager/Planner, and Lu Hauger, Assistant Planner. Emails dated October 25, 2016 regarding the proposed code amendments from Chris Hawkins, AICP of Alpine Planning LLC and Ben Jackson, IV of Christie's International Real Estate. Hypothetical Structure Analysis for High Density Residential Zones depicting building heights, lot coverage and building footprints, prepared by Doug Canright, Chairman of the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission reviewed the draft four updates with Staff.

The Town Manager suggested changing the meeting time for the workshop portion of the monthly meetings. The time change would provide the Commissioners with more time to work through the zoning discussions. The Commission agreed to move the meeting time to 4:30 p.m., for zoning discussions and will last until 5:30 p.m. Public hearings will begin at 5:30p.m. The new meeting time will begin with the January 3 meeting, and then resume with regular meeting in February.

NEW BUSINESS

3. 2017 Workshop Schedule

Manager Coates circulated the 2017 workshop schedule, which included combined workshops with the Town Council. Manager Coates requested the Commission to review the schedule, advising her of any changes.

4. Changes to the January 31, 2017 Regular Meeting

The Town Manager requested the meeting time for January 31, 2017 be changed to 6:30 p.m. in order for the Commissioners to attend the Space to Create Survey Launch event,

which is scheduled from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. the same day. The Commission agreed to the schedule change.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

5. Approval of the Minutes from the meeting of October 25, 2016

Councilor Hunter moved to approve the minutes from October 25, 2016. Commissioner Liske seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Christian
Deputy Clerk